

ENCIRCLED EMOTIONS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Neethu Raghavan from Kerala is currently pursuing her M.Tech in computer science and engineering from Bangalore and works at Dell EMC2.

Writing was always a passion. The Full Moon, her first book in Amazon, though went unrecognized, did not settle her fire and blow away her love for writing.

DEDICATION

To all the hands that raised as a support,
all the hearts that motivated.

Special dedication to a person, who was
the greatest motivation for all the works
in and out of this book.

*WRITING IS A CALLING,
NOT A CHOICE*

-ISABEL ALLENDE

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JOKER

Joker" he hated being tagged for his discomforts during his teens...

"Joker Doctor" in the children's cancer ward is too much happy to be the only one...

BEAUTY

The beauty contest wanted an undamaged, plain and fresh face... She was rejected, but the scars on her face had a story of strength and bravery to share...

LATE

"May I come in?" However late he was he always had a place in the class and a plate with rice and his favorite curries and two drowsy eyes always waited for him till the next morning. But life taught him the bitter part. The Late-comer waited for a lifetime, and the door was closed, by not attending his mom's perhaps the last call.

WOMAN'S DAY

"Happy woman's day!" Said mom to her young lady whose eyes were drowsy, still twinkling. And sighed!! Little girl was no more a girl, but a lady.

SUICIDE

The decision was too big for her. The rope was too huge for her to carry, to knot, to tie, to hang. Scars were clearly visible and blood dripped from her lower body ...yet the media shouted..."8 year old child committed suicide, mental stress could be the reason."

DRINKS

"Take your drinks with care. At last I am the only one who is going to suffer.."
He expected it to be her. But it was his own body.

PUFF

Each puff he took,
Was to exhale her out..
But never did he know,
Those cigarettes were
Burning
Her only hopes..

UNPREDICTABLE

"Ladies are unpredictable!" I have heard many of my friends telling this but with a negative tone. She proved it!

It was my first visit to my brother's house and I was there for a long one month stay. She, his wife from past one year, welcomed me with a bright smile. I had many ugly concepts which were dumped by my family into my heart about the girl who grabbed their son from them and eloped. I always had so much respect for my brother, who had his own concepts about life. He had many revolutionary thoughts and he lived life in an idealistic manner. That pride had made him marry a lady from a caste "lower than ours (so says our family)"

She made me very comfortable over there, spending time talking and making dishes for me, because from our conversations she knew how much my brother cared for me and how much I respected him.

First day evening I saw my brother drunk, totally out of control when he entered the room. The scenes that followed was much alike to those in the movies: quarrels, pulling his lady's hair...very much similar to any drunkard intro scenes. After some time, she came to me and told that the food will be ready in an hour and asked me to take bath. I had my dinner all alone that day. After the food, she sat with me and convinced me that he had attended a party by his friends that night who forced him to drink. He was strict in keeping the rooms clean and everything in place, but that day she was busy that she couldn't take care of them, which made him angry. A small piece of paper disobeying would make him red, since childhood. After that my sister-in-law went to kitchen for her food and I went to bed.

The next morning, my brother walked into my bed with no sign of regret (but no sign of easiness either). We had a cup of coffee together and he left to office. I sat the full day, peeping into job portals and finding a perfect match for me. The

ones I liked would not like me...after all the horoscopes should match right?

That day my brother reached home by 11pm. I could see her face white and pale and tensed while we waited for my brother to come. Only when the calling bell rang she was relieved. But this really shocked me! My brother was in a condition worse than yesterday. He couldn't move his hands, even then he managed to get hold of my sister's hair and pulled her forcefully down. I wanted to stop him, but she ordered me to get inside my room and 'mind my business.'

Yes! The ladies are so unpredictable! The same lady who was caring me like a son for the past 2 days have now ordered me not to interfere in their family. Was my family right in tagging her cunning? Was as cruel as my family had mentioned? But she was nice to me yesterday, but she was nice to me today morning..!!

I did not mind to have dinner that night, indeed I did not get out of my room. There was a knock at the door in the midnight, but I did not open the door. The next day, I did not talk to her nor did

she come to me. But the dining table was full all the time I went that side and the water in the bathroom was hot and fresh. The day of silence broke when my brother entered that night. He was drunk but a little normal that day. He didn't hurt anyone and I thought things have settled down. But I did not go to him, I did not talk to him. His image in my heart had too much love and care and had great ideas and vision in life. I did not feel to respect a man who hurts his wife physically and harass her mentally... I did not go to him even when it was dinner time. It was her who broke into my room with anger rushing through her blood. "Why didn't you talk to him? Why do you hate him? What do you know? He hurts me for a reason. I am harmed, because I deserve that. Don't overact without knowing the real story. Go! Talk to him! Don't make him disappointed. If he came home smiling today, it was just for you."

I did not understand what she told or what was going on. But that night, the conversation with my brother solved many doubts. To become a Hero among

the fellow ones, he had married a lady who mismatched all his concepts. Though he spoke about caste discriminations and banning them, he had an old feudal lord inside him (Like all others in the family). He cannot cope up with his wife, however hard she tried to be very keen, caring and lovable. He did not want him to love her so he came everyday drunk and imbalanced and hurt her. He did not gain anything seeing her cry but that old landlord in him felt no sympathy either. Her parents who knew this had advised her to go home with them, but she refused. But I think I know why she refused. But I cannot tell that to my brother, not because ladies are unpredictable, but because he wouldn't listen to me, he wouldn't listen to anyone.

I went to sleep that night. It was so cold and I was shivering. But morning I woke up with a blanket covering me and realized it was no more morning, but noon time then. Sister-in-law was very busy in the kitchen and I sat with my laptop. When she noticed I that I was out of bed she came running, scolding me for

not informing her. She quickly prepared Dosa and I had my breakfast even without enquiring whether she had or not. I really wanted to talk to her. But I did not know what to tell-To escape from my brother? Or to stay close to him? I did not know, so I didn't.

When I sat with my laptop she came and sat to my side. She selected some jobs she asked me not to select some others.

It was in the 2nd week there that I got an interview call and we had many mock interviews practiced. I attended one, came back home and found the room locked. I waited for her saw her coming, from a temple nearby and not after more than an hour I got a call telling I was selected for the post.

If she was my own sister I would have hugged her. But she was my sister-in-law and indeed the one whom my brother hated himself. But I am sure, he don't hate her and nobody who knows her can do that.

I had to send a letter back to the office and I was sitting with it, not able to make proper sentences in English. My brother who was good in English refused, which

made me extremely sad, but pointed his fingers towards his wife. And a letter was so simple for an 'English-Lover' like her.

The night before I was leaving is still the, most memorable. She came and sat with me. "I know how much you respect your brother. And you might be upset seeing his transformation. But never blame him alone for what he has become now. I am the one responsible. I am ready to move away if he really wants it. But now he wants someone to be with him in all his best and worst and I believe a girl like me can be perfect match for him. Don't let your parents know anything that had happened here. Let them believe I am the worst daughter-in-law they can get, well, I am!!! But at least you... After meeting you I wished if I had a brother like this, who comes running whenever I was in trouble..."

I felt a wave of regret swallowing me. I should have. I should have stopped my brother's hand from slapping her. But he was my brother and she my sister in law and men are always the same. Very predictable!!!

KISS DAY

He kissed on her forehead. For the first time a warmth scooped her up. He held her hands tightly and whispered, "Happy Kiss Day". She didn't know such a day existed before, like how she never knew such a gentle a man existed. He took his hands away and rushed to office... All the pain of her past vanished with his pinch on her cheeks before he departed. And finally she saw love winning over the lust and realized, she was no more "just a flesh."

STRANGE

"Love? Strange!! "The father shouted at his seventh standard kid when he explained how much he loved the girl who bought him fried potatoes daily. He then send a naughty look at his wife. And she gave him a shy smile back.

THE FACE

She was tensed until she saw him. The most crooked face, the most ugly and the very strange face, had for the first time send a relief in her. "Alas! Found a familiar face" she exclaimed... she went to him "Can you drop me home"? Still she had a fear in her heart. It was midnight, nobody around, except the man whom she was afraid of, since childhood walking behind her. When they reached her home. He stood, she walked in and turned back. He was at the gate with a torn shirt shivering with cold. She went in to take a blanket and returned. He had left by the time. She looked around... Couldn't find him. And finally went to sleep... the next day...She found him...On the footpath lying lifeless... Like a suspense thriller movie life has made a great twist and like any character in the movie she stood with great expressions of shock and shiver...

PROMISE DAY

Waiting each day and night, she finally fell asleep... when she was closing her eyes, her son was celebrating 'promise day' with his girlfriend...

SECRET

Watching the sunset in the silence, with head on the shoulders of someone who trust us a lot is the greatest happiness in life, she thought.

When they were about to part, he whispered in her ears, "Let this remain as a secret..." And it remained, as it traveled from one ear to another. And finally it reached his own ears "Did you hear the secret?" He was shocked to hear a love story, his own love story indeed !!!

This was what he had wanted all these years. To be in love with her and the thing which might at any moment takes away his childhood bravery award-to tell her how much he loved her! So he never told!

She too heard the story. Their love story and was excited to hear her name with the person whom she loved like anything, but never expressed because of the fear of broken wings of friendship.

"Let this remain as a secrete" never remained in her ears, but the tears of his past that flowed into her hands still left a cool sense of warmth around her heart. And she kept the promise.

This sunset was yet another special one, where they laughed at the waves of jokes that had hit them each of them wishing, if the other minded to move with them, "I would have followed!"

SMALL

"How small the world was?" Twinkled her eyes as she spoke... How sweet a voice, I forgot the scars on her face, I forgot my grey hairs and felt like holding her hands and dancing with her. Without a word, life has brought us together in the same train, to the same place. Unanswered phone calls, rejected letters that flew back and the unaccepted friend request... all fell down meaningless before her excited eyes. Yes!! The world is small for anyone to elope into darkness... This world was indeed too small...

TOPPER

Being a topper was a practice, a routine.
But when all the offshoots shoot up,
many did fall. To the onlookers she was
just one among them, but the broken
among the bend.

WAR

Wars were to

Win

History has a lot

But

Memories holds the

Lost battles

MUSIC

Their music album had six un-played songs, indeed never played beautiful lullabies.

CHOICE

She was always given a choice. But now, fate took her to a point to choose her life. Father or mother..? Like a small 4 years old girl who was asked "Whom do you love the most? Father or Mother?" the 15 year old girl gave the same answer, "both of them", but this time looking at her parents with a wet cheeks.

TRANSFORMATION

Gunshots echoed from behind. With The cross hanging on his hands, he walked into the light, following his inner chants.

POEM

Poems are
Tears of a
Desperate
Pen
The pain, the cries
The death.

HASH TAG

"Where are you?"

I am in a land where

Justice is just a hashtag...

HALF MOON

He walked all the way down from the clinic to the shore. The sunset was beautiful. The moon came, with half his face hidden. The world was faceless, there half the face was too much to bother. Thinking gave him a relief. He was lucky, he had half a face, and he had at least half.

BLOOD

And suddenly in the dark, two hands clenched around her waist. The power for rescue sometimes comes from within and may be it will reach till finger tips and sometimes till the sharp end of the teeth. With all the power she had, she bit the masculine hands that had the feel of a dirty ape. But, the blood that flowed into her mouth...was indeed her own blood! She pushed the monster away. Knowing that it fell into the light, she closed her eyes, very tightly not to see that face.

FRIENDS

After many years they met
And could not
Recognize...
It's not the scars..
I tell you,
It is not the scars,
But the positions
And responsibilities..
It is the not the grey hair
But the mask over
The memories..
True friends never forget
Each other..
They act and try
Not to react.
But true friends
Cannot forget
Each other

THANK YOU